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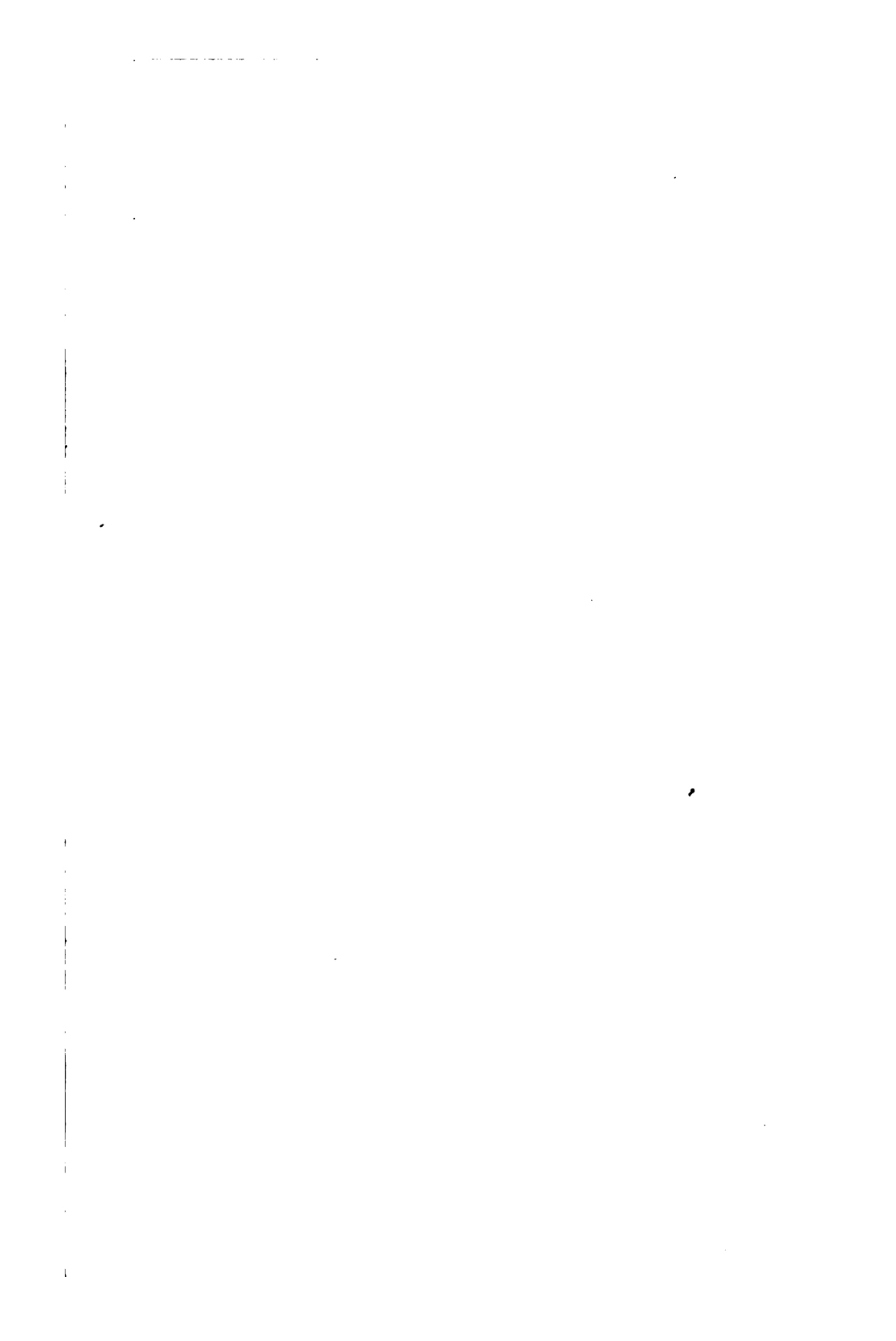
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1159.



A
C H A R G E.

G. WOODFALL, ANGEL COURT, SKINNER STREET, LONDON.

A
C H A R G E
TO THE
CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF DURHAM,
AT
THE PRIMARY VISITATION
OF
EDWARD, LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM,
IN
AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, AND OCTOBER, 1837.



London :
T. CADELL, STRAND ;
J., G., AND F. RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND
WATERLOO PLACE ;
F. ANDREWS, DURHAM ; E. CHARNLEY, NEWCASTLE
ON TYNE.

1837.

1159.

A.

C H A R G E,

ETC.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

THE very peculiar circumstances, under which a Bishop of Durham now addresses his Clergy for the first time, render it necessary that I should advert both to the novelty and difficulty of the situation in which I am placed.

To some of the alterations which have been effected in the position of this See, I cannot but give my approval. I view without any regret the separation of the civil functions from those of a spiritual nature ; imposing as was the grandeur, and influential the patronage, attached to the antient dignity of Count Palatine. According to the more accurate judgment of modern days, there is something unsuited to

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the sacred duties of a Bishop in the exercise of mere civil jurisdiction. The abstraction of power, wielded by a Custos Rotulorum, cannot but have the good effect of diminishing some feeling of envy at what was considered a misplaced privilege ; while the care and attention, necessarily allotted to the due discharge of such a trust, will be more properly directed to the spiritual concerns of the diocese, which, you must be well aware, are neither few nor light.

Neither can I disapprove the alienation of a portion of the revenues of the See, large as they were, and of late years even increased, in amount. A considerable deduction might have been made for the general benefit of the church ; a sufficiency allotted to personal and official expenses ; yet a larger share might have been appropriated to the urgent claims of the diocese. I say the *urgent* claims of the diocese ;—for it differs perhaps from every other, if not in the peculiar features which it presents, yet in the singular and almost appalling frequency, in which those features are seen. There is no diocese, in which so many large parishes are found, with the population so scattered, as to be thrown at a most inconvenient distance from any existing place.

of worship. There is perhaps no diocese, in which such numerous instances occur of inhabitants so rapidly increasing, or so suddenly created. Where a barren moor lately presented the appearance of a desert, never inhabited, and but rarely visited, by man, a rail-road has been formed, or a coal-pit opened, and suddenly a swarthy people flock around; cottages are built; men, women, and children appear, diligently employed in gaining their daily bread, but seeking in vain for that bread, which sustains the vital principle even to everlasting ages. Lastly, I fear, there is no diocese, which presents so many instances of redundant population, and scanty endowment. For it must be remembered that, in these large parishes, the care of one, however zealous, however active, will not suffice. The united exertions of two or more may be required, while the whole income derived from the parish may not afford adequate remuneration to the laborious and conscientious incumbent.

Hence it appears that, in many cases, a necessity exists for erecting chapels, and providing for the due discharge of sacred duties in them. In other cases, it is most important that

schools be built, and diligent and well-qualified masters appointed to superintend them. In other parishes again, however urgent may be the want of assistance to the incumbent, his income may be so limited, or his family so circumstanced, that he cannot provide himself with that aid, of which he is deeply sensible that his parishioners, as well as himself, stand in need.

Now, in all these cases, the late splendid amount of episcopal income was enabled to supply, I may say, immediate and often sufficient aid. If the repair of an old church, or the building of a new one, became necessary ; if a school was to be erected, or a schoolmaster paid ; or if the deficient income of a parish created the necessity for some additional means to the incumbent, appeal was made to the Bishops of Durham ; and I am bound in justice to them, more especially to my immediate and lamented predecessor, to say, that they seem to have held their almost princely revenues "as good stewards of the manifold grace of God ;" * and freely imparted to all, as all had need.

With this ready resource for pressing emergency ; with these ample funds for the supply

* 1 Pet. iv. 10.

of new wants, and the remedy of existing inconvenience, the peculiar situation of the diocese attracted less observation ;—indeed its pressing want of spiritual succour was little known beyond its own limits. But when the change was impending, and it was ascertained that no small portion of the episcopal income was to be withdrawn, it was natural, it was proper, that the state of the case should be represented to those, with whom the power of effecting the proposed changes was deposited ; and that the urgent necessities of the diocese should be proclaimed.

In this instance only then, do I feel any disposition to complain of the arrangements, which have been proposed and confirmèd. Notwithstanding the very large deduction that has been made from the revenues of the See ; notwithstanding the heavy and inevitable expenses, which are entailed upon its possessor ; yet, I trust, with judicious, yet not parsimonious retrenchment, enough is left for domestic and for family purposes ; and something too for charities and other public objects.

Nevertheless, I cannot help thinking that it would have been more useful to the diocese, if a greater latitude had been left to the Bishop for

supplying the extraordinary wants of his clergy; and I can only express an earnest wish that, in any future arrangements which may be made, whether in revising such as have now received the force of law, or in any other contemplated changes, all the resources which are drawn from one part of the ecclesiastical funds of the diocese, may, as much as possible, be devoted to the sustenance and improvement of the other.

I am well aware that, even with the ample funds entrusted to their care, my predecessors would not have been able to accomplish all the good they did achieve, if their exertions had not been seconded by the liberal cooperation of many among the laity, to whom they pointed out the means of usefulness, while they set the example of Christian beneficence. Willingly would I hope, that they who so kindly cooperated with my predecessors, may aid more effectually my humble endeavours to promote the glory of God, by diffusing the knowledge of their moral and religious duties among his creatures. And gladly shall I listen to any suggestions, by which those beneficial objects, which occupied the thoughts of preceding bishops, can be best attained—whether by indi-

vidual exertion in each particular instance, or by the combined efforts of a society, formed for the express purpose of building and endowing chapels and schools.

To one Society, which has lately risen up in the metropolis, and to which our late most gracious and lamented Sovereign was anxious to extend his bounty, I have real pleasure in calling your attention. It is calculated to abate one of the evils, which I have mentioned as affecting the interests, and impairing the usefulness, of the less-endowed clergy in the larger districts; inasmuch as it provides funds, by which they may obtain professional assistance, without encroaching too much, if at all, upon their own scanty incomes. I allude to the "Society for Promoting the Employment of Additional Curates in Populous Places."* Another Society had been formed with the best intentions, I am persuaded, for the purpose of obviating the same difficulty. But, in my opinion, the plan, upon which they proceeded, was not conceived with

* Since this Charge was first delivered, I have had the satisfaction of being informed, that her Majesty the Queen has been graciously pleased to become the Patroness of this Society.

a judgment corresponding to the purity of the design. It was calculated to introduce an anomaly into the administration of sacred duties, by admitting the agency of laymen in the offices of expounding scripture, and of administering spiritual consolation. These offices are with us assigned exclusively to those who are invested with holy orders, after a course of study, designed to prepare them for the due discharge of such holy functions. Now the Society, to which I have adverted, steers clear of this, and, I think, every other objection; and I cannot but hope, that the excellent persons with whom the Pastoral Aid Society originated, may upon further consideration, either remodel their own plans, or lend the aid of their character and influence to ours.

To this Society, which I have just mentioned, I felt myself called upon to subscribe to a large amount, in the hope that I might be able, through its means, to lend my assistance throughout the diocese more effectually than if I relied upon my own unaided resources. And thus publicly I may express a wish that, as soon as it comes into operation, those clergymen, who may require assistance in the discharge of their

parochial duties, will furnish me with such particulars as may justify me in expecting a favourable answer to an application in their behalf.

The foregoing observations appear to have been called for by the remarkable change which has taken place in the situation of the Bishop of Durham, as to the offices with which he was invested, and the funds which he was empowered to administer. I must however trespass a little further upon your time, while I allude to those other alterations, which have already affected the episcopacy generally; and those, which are known to be in contemplation for the sake of remedying some abuses, which the lapse of time had introduced into the Church. I am led to offer such observations, because a sort of indifference begins to be felt in some quarters respecting these measures, as if they really were not beneficial—as if no improvement had taken place—as if, in short, every evil which had attracted notice, and produced a call for amendment, were still existing undressed—were still flourishing in all its acquired deformity; and as if no axe were threatened to be laid for its effectual extirpation.

Now we cannot but recollect, that complaints

were continually made of the excessive incomes in some dioceses, and of the lamentable deficiencies in others : in consequence of which, it was usual for other preferment to be held with the smaller bishoprics. Moreover, the great inequality that prevailed among them all, occasioned very frequent translations to take place. The result of this state of things was actual injury to the Church ; when a Bishop was removed to another See, before he had become thoroughly acquainted with the condition of that which he left. It was also supposed, that this same inequality placed the episcopal bench in a state of subserviency to the Minister of the day ; for which apprehended evil, there was in point of fact but little foundation. Nevertheless, the very supposition that such might be the case, rendered it highly desirable, that the cause of such complaint, even if imaginary, should be removed. Now, what has actually been effected, by the changes which have been introduced ? The income of all the larger dioceses has been diminished, so that they can never exceed a certain amount. In this diocese, in particular, no less a sum than £13,000 per annum has

been withdrawn from the Bishop. From the excess of incomes thus modified, it is hoped that the deficiencies in smaller bishoprics will be in time supplied, and that no Commendam shall in future be held with any; while the practice of translation will be very much diminished in frequency. In addition to these measures, it is intended that the prebendal stalls, which were merely sinecures, shall become available to the more efficient discharge of duty. It is also in contemplation, that the stalls, to which residence is annexed, shall contribute to the same beneficial object. In what manner this shall be effected, is still a question of some doubt; and I confess that, in my opinion, the best interests of religion may be promoted by some measure less sweeping, than what has been contemplated.

Besides this, a Bill has been introduced into Parliament for the abolition of pluralities of livings. And the provisions which it contains are surely so stringent, as to satisfy the most hostile opponent of this junction of preferments. No doubt, great abuses have formerly taken place in the accumulation of preferment upon relatives and favorites; but,

I am not aware, that any imputation of the kind has been fastened upon any of the present members of the bench. I have reason to believe that their own good feelings, and sensibility to public opinion, would prevent any attempt at repeating an abuse, which has been so justly and so generally condemned : and I am quite persuaded that a measure, calculated to do away with whatever was really hurtful or odious in the practice, would pass into a law with the concurrence of the prelates. So that, in point of fact, those evils, which excited public attention, and caused the outcry for their correction, may be considered as already removed, or on the point of being speedily abated.

In this manner, will many of the causes which sharpened the hostility of adversaries, or produced uneasiness to friends, have ceased to operate ; and although every part of the proposed changes may not be equally judicious or advantageous, yet we cannot but indulge the hope, that a substantial improvement will be discernible in the frame and administration of our ecclesiastical body. Moreover, while we may congratulate ourselves upon the effect of

every measure, which really shall be found to improve the National Church; it must be gratifying also to recollect, that some of those causes of complaint, which aggrieved the well-disposed and conscientious Dissenter, have been removed by just and considerate acts of legislation.

Gratifying would it be to us all to have it in our power to feel, that every similar complaint had disappeared. But, painful as is the acknowledgement, such an expectation is inconsistent with the current of human feeling and human experience. It is no more likely that every man, or body of men, should rest entirely contented, than that all should think alike upon any given question. It becomes, however, a consideration, and a very important practical consideration with *us*, in our peculiar sphere as ministers of Christ; whether we have the means of abating any feeling of discontent, or of lessening the unavoidable evil of difference in opinion, by impartial attention to the arguments of those, to whom we may be opposed; by courtesy to all, with whom we may be thrown in the way of intercourse; and by that spirit of humility and charity, which may best

prove our devotion to Him, whose disciples we profess to be ; and in whose service we cannot signalize our zeal more effectually, than by practising to the very utmost of our power the virtues, which He so beautifully exemplified.

I address these remarks to you, my Reverend Brethren, with all the frankness of a friend ; because we live unhappily in times of great excitement—excitement both religious and political—in times, when the wisest and most cautious of us all has need of the utmost vigilance ; yea, and of prayer for grace, “ that he walk *in wisdom toward them that are without* ;” * “ give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully ” †—but “ follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” ‡

When a spirit of contention upon any subject is once afloat, men are wont to listen to vague reports, and argue from false premises. Under any circumstances, they are disposed to espouse the cause of those, whom they consider as on their side ; and too hastily and indiscriminately condemn all who may, with as much purity

* Col. iv. 5.

† 1 Tim. v. 14.

‡ Rom. xiv. 19.

and integrity as themselves, take the contrary part. When the temporary excitement shall have passed away, they begin to feel surprised at the emotions it has raised. They are ashamed of the precipitance with which they have acted, and the violence into which they have been impelled. They may then call to mind with effect the weighty advice of the Apostle; and allow me to say, that I draw *your* attention to it in the same affectionate spirit, as marked the primitive admonition : “ Wherefore, MY BELOVED BRETHREN, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath : for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.”*

I have the less scruple in making these observations upon the temper and discretion, by which it is so desirable that *our* conduct should be distinguished ; because, you must be aware, that we are continually exposed to the scrutiny of observant and even jealous eyes. At the same time, so far as I have yet had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the character and habits of my clergy, I have little doubt but such remarks would be more season-

* James i. 19, 20.

able elsewhere; although they would in proportion be less favourably received. I allude more particularly to the Sister Island, which is so unhappily torn by religious dissension; and where, I am persuaded, that a more tolerant spirit, exhibited by our Protestant brethren, laity as well as clergy, would not fail to elicit something more of the benignant effects of our common Christianity from those of the Roman Catholic persuasion.

Let me not here be misunderstood, as derogating from the just claims any of our clerical brethren there may have to our respect and sympathy for their learning and zeal, or for their patience under severe privations; still less am I to be misunderstood, as imputing a want of Christian temper to those alone, who adopt the same creed with ourselves. I am no more disposed to excuse the Catholic, than I am the Protestant; if either shall be found at any time to forget the lessons of forbearance and kindness, which are so constantly inculcated upon *all*, who take upon themselves the name of Christ. Surely, we must feel that, unless such lessons are remembered, and put in practice too, in vain shall we anticipate that

cordial union in promoting the public good, which ought to subsist among inhabitants of the same country, and subjects of the same government. In order to effect this most desirable object, it is absolutely necessary that they, who are conspicuous in zeal, should be foremost in charity; and that they dwell with profit upon the *conduct*, as well as *doctrine*, of that Divine Master, who has taught us by his holy Apostle, to “be *kindly affectioned* one to another, *in brotherly love*; in honour preferring one another”;—and has even enjoined us to “bless them which persecute; bless, and curse not.” *

To return, however, to the main subject; the state and prospects of our own establishment. From the amount of intelligence and zeal displayed by the clergy; from the good effects produced by their ministration and example; I am satisfied that the Established Church has nothing to fear from its opponents, so long as its ministers continue true to themselves, and true to the holy cause, to which they are in so especial a manner devoted. Their best security, under Providence,

* Rom. xii. 10, 14.

will be found in their learning, their piety, their moderation. Neither "fighting from without" can create alarm ; nor "fears from within"* disturb their peace, so long as, by diligent and accurate study of the Holy Scriptures, they learn to agree more and more among themselves upon doubtful points of doctrine—and so long, too, as they manifest that condescension to prejudice, that tenderness to ignorance, that meekness under unjust censure, that affectionate desire to instruct, and that disposition to resign what to themselves was dear for the sake of accomplishing good to others ; which marked the career, and ensured the success, of our ever blessed Saviour and his Apostles.

My brethren ; as I commenced this address by alluding to the changes which have taken place in the Diocese, let me in conclusion advert to one remarkable and beneficial institution, for which we are indebted to the wisdom and liberality of my predecessor, seconded by the munificence of the Dean and Chapter. I allude to the novel and gratifying circumstance

* 2 Cor. vii. 5.

of an University, founded in this northern extremity of England, for the purpose of procuring to its inhabitants the benefit of a sound and comprehensive education, brought, as it were, to their very doors.

It has been my duty to examine, with some attention, the manner in which the designs of its founders have been carried into execution ; and it is truly gratifying to my feelings, that I can bear honest testimony to the talents, attainments, and diligence of all the instructors, as well as to the faithful zeal, with which the duty of superintending this growing community has been discharged.

It is difficult for me to express the satisfaction with which I announce to you, that our university rests, like its elder sisters, upon the secure foundation of a royal charter—and I am satisfied that, whatever instruction those renowned bodies are capable of affording to their students, may here be supplied to the youth of the North without drawing them to an inconvenient distance, or exposing them to unnecessary expense.

In subjects of classical knowledge, as well as of scientific research, the students here may

look with full hope to become excellently trained ; and I may add, as a considerable improvement upon the plans of the other universities ; and it is a part of the system in which you, my brethren, will feel peculiar interest ; a regular and efficient course of instruction is provided for the theological student. I have already witnessed the beneficial effects of this part of the institution, from the proficiency of candidates for holy orders ; and I humbly pray the Almighty Disposer of all things that it may enjoy the blessing of His protection, prosperously pursue its salutary toils, and furnish to the country a succession of youths, nurtured by wholesome discipline, trained in all good habits, and, above all, carrying into the bosom of the Church a sound knowledge of the Holy Scriptures ; of the evidences by which their truth is ascertained ; and of the doctrines which they really inculcate. Such an accession to the ministry of Christ cannot fail to yield additional support to the Church, of which they are members ; nor can such knowledge fail to produce the fairest fruits of Virtue, Charity, and Peace.

NOTE ON "THEOLOGICAL STUDENT,"

Page 24.

I subjoined to a Charge, addressed to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Chichester in the year 1834, and published by Mr. Cadell, Strand, a list of books for Theological Students. I now add, that it is *absolutely necessary* that Candidates for Orders should be possessed of the information which may be gained from works similar to the following.

For Deacons' Orders—

Paley's Natural Theology.

Leland on the Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation.

Paley's Evidences.

The four Gospels, Acts, Epistles to Romans, Timothy and Titus; in Bloomfield's, or Valpy's, edition of the Greek Testament; with

Parkhurst's Lexicon by Rose.

Elsley's Annotations on the Gospels, with the Introduction.

Clarke's Paraphrase on the Gospels.

Burnet, or Hey, on the Articles.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that the contents of the Old Testament must have been

carefully read and digested ; with works illustrating the Chronology of Sacred History, and the Geography of the Holy Land.

To the foregoing books, or books of the same character, *Candidates for Priests' Orders* should add,

The rest of the Greek Testament, with Slade's Annotations on the Epistles ; and Whitby's, or Macknight's, Paraphrase.

Butler's Analogy.

Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*.

Hammond on the Psalms, and on the New Testament, will be found very instructive.

Candidates for Holy Orders cannot have any need to be reminded that, by the 34th Canon, they are expected to "be able to yield an account of their faith *in Latin*."

I may here repeat, that every clergyman will do well to possess a copy of Mr. Hodgson's "Instructions to the Clergy." They will there find the necessary information about papers, which are required either for admission to Orders, licence to a Curacy or for Non-residence, or for institution to a Living, &c.

I further mention, that the time of Ordination in this Diocese will usually be at Auckland, in the latter part of the year ; that due notice will be given of the exact time, and that the papers of Candidates may be sent before the end of August to my Provincial Secretary, Joseph Davison,

Esq., in packets under cover to me, *not exceeding one ounce in weight*. I may also add, that it is not desirable to send papers of value, such as a Presentation, Letters of Orders, &c., by the post, in any case where they may be delivered in person.

During my residence in London, papers should be addressed to John Burder, Esq., under cover as before.

E. D.

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